(a) whether it is a fact that during the Uruguay Round discussions Government of India gave particulars regarding negative protection to agriculture which is the main means of earning in rural areas;

(b) if so, whether Government are considering to rectify this anomaly against the rural people;

(c) if so, the modalities thereof;

(d) if not, the reasons therefore?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OR THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM):

(a) The Uruguay Round Agreement on Agriculture does not use the concept of positive and negative protection. The concept that has been used to measure agricultural support to determine subsidy reduction obligations is the Aggregate Measurement of Support (AMS). AMS comprises two elements, namely, Product Specific AMS and Non-Product Specific AMS.

AMS is a negotiated concept designed to measure the extent of trade distorting domestic support in member countries of GATT. It does not take into account a number of support measures for the agricultural sector. For this reasons it is not appropriate to equate the concepts of AMS and protection. The negative figures for product specific AMS in the case of India arise from the fact that in most agricultural commodities our support prices during the base period (1986-88) were lower than the Reference International Prices. Non-product specific subsidies in India during this period were however psoitive.

(b), to (d) Do not arise in view of (a) above.

Working Ground of Beedi and Tobacco Labours

1505. SHRI YERRA NARAYANASWAMY: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have received representations to form a working Group on Beedi and Tobacco Labour;

(b) what steps are proposed to consider this demand; and

(c) how do Government propsoe to assist and protect labour in this sector?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (SHRI P.A. SANGMA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) The Ministry of Health & Family Welfare have set up an Expert Committee to undertake a coperative study on the economic of tobacco use *inter-alia* examining the tax revenue and foreign exchange earnings, employment and consumer expenditure on the one hand and the cost of tertiary level medical care facilities for treatment of tobacco related diseases, losses due to fire hazard, ecological damage due to deforestation and disposal of tobacco related waste on the other hand with a view to making an economic study of the impact of tobacco consumption.

Renovation of FCI Godowns in the country

1506. SHRI S. AUSTIN: Will the Minister of FOOD be pleased to state the number of FCI godowns renovated during the last three years and the amount spend therein, year-wise, State-wise and the number of godowns likely to be renovated during 1995 and amount allocated for this purpose, state-wise?

THE MINISTER OF FOOD (SHRI AJIT SINGH): In order to keep the godown complexes storage worthy, rountine repairs and maintenance work for godowns including weighbridges, roads, electrical installations etc. are carried out regularly by FCI. Amount spent on such works during the last three years are as under:—

	Rs. crores
1991-92	11.88
1992-93	11.30
1993-94	12.48